

Rabies Alert – Updated September 16, 2009

Thus far in 2009 two animals have tested positive for rabies in Charles County; a raccoon was located in Pomfret, and a bat was located in Waldorf. In 2008 fifteen animals tested positive for rabies in Charles County, consisting of seven raccoons found in Nanjemoy, Waldorf, Brandywine, Newburg, White Plains, and Bryantown, three foxes in Waldorf, Bryantown and La Plata, one groundhog in La Plata, and four skunks in Indian Head and White Plains. The years of 2006 and 2007 saw sharp increases from 2005 in the number of rabid animals. In 2007, thirty animals tested positive for rabies, including five foxes, sixteen raccoons, seven skunks, one bat, and one groundhog. The foxes came from the Charlotte Hall, Hughesville, and Waldorf areas, while the raccoons originated from Indian Head, Marbury, Port Tobacco, Bryans Road, La Plata, Waldorf, Hughesville, Charlotte Hall, and Pomfret. The skunks were found in La Plata, Bel Alton, Faulkner, and Waldorf, the bat being discovered in La Plata, and the groundhog in Port Tobacco. As is evident from the statistics, rabies is found throughout the county, and not specific to any one area or animal. It is consequently imperative for all to acknowledge its presence and react with caution towards other animals, and action in acquiring and maintaining current rabies vaccinations for pets.

Rabies is a disease of animals and people, and the virus is spread through the saliva of a rabid animal. Usually this occurs when a rabid animal bites or scratches a person or animal, but secondary exposure can occur from contacting saliva off of the coat or fur of an animal that was exposed to a rabid animal. The virus may get into the body through open cuts or wounds, or through the eyes, nose, or mouth. Domesticated animals like dogs, cats, and ferrets can get rabies from wild animals such as raccoons, foxes, skunks, bats, opossums, and the like. Getting your pets vaccinated against rabies will prevent this from happening. A current rabies vaccination for your pet is vital in light of the current evidence of rabies in the area. Your local veterinarian is the most immediate solution for non-vaccinated animals.

Humane Society of Charles County Clinic

Sunday, November 1, 2009 (TENTATIVE)

1:00 PM to 3:00 PM.

**Location: Humane Society of Charles County,
71 Industrial Park Drive, Waldorf.**

Rabies vaccine \$10.00

Distemper vaccine \$12.00

Micro-chipping \$20.00

Dogs must be on leash or in carriers, all cats and ferrets in carriers.

For further information call the Humane Society at 301-645-8181